



# *The Insider*

[www.senate.mi.gov/switalski](http://www.senate.mi.gov/switalski)

## **Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10**

**June 23, 2006**

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at [senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov) or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a library near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

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### **Mickey's Letter Bag: House Bill 4118**

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Dear Senator Switalski,

We just read your article on the vote against your amendment for steroid testing. We are in full agreement of the need for random testing, not only in the interest of fair play but also to protect our children's health. The *Detroit News* editors need to get their heads out of the sand and recognize what a serious issue this is. Your colleagues who voted against your amendment based on seeing which way the political wind is blowing are cowardly and just one more indication of why the public is so disillusioned with our elected officials, local, state and federal. We want people who have the courage to stand up and be counted for the things that really matter to us. Thank you for being one of them.

Susan & Paul Gonzales  
Sterling Heights

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Mickey:

You are right on with House Bill 4118! I'm just sorry that your colleagues don't see the problem from your perspective. They are taking an "it is not a big enough problem" attitude. Like the saying goes; "what goes around, comes around". This will eventually become bigger news when some student dies from steroid use, then the Legislature will take big heat for their inaction. Keep up the good work...

Regards,  
Ed Debler  
Sterling Heights

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Hi Mickey:

I am 100% behind your bill regarding steroids. Keep trying, because you are right. I am a grandmother of 12 and the thought of such a thing as steroid use happening and not being checked is inexcusable. Keep up the wonderful job you are doing in the Senate.

Thanks again,  
Pat Newman  
Clinton Township

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I would have to agree with you concerning random testing for steroids in high schools. The main reason that I believe in random testing is that high school sports are a choice. High school sports are not forced upon students. Therefore, I feel that students put themselves out there to be eligible for random testing.

According to a national poll taken by the Sacred Heart University, just about 9.3% said they were either strongly opposed or somewhat opposed to random testing in high schools. On the other hand, 87.3% of the nation either strongly supported or somewhat supported random testing in high schools. I believe that so many people are supportive because they feel they have nothing to hide.

Steroids could only bring down the competition in high school sports. Random testing would cut down the amount of high school students who do in fact use steroids to boost athletic ability. The problem with steroid use in high school students is they are more often than not unaware of the dangers in steroid use. They are too often blinded by the quick benefits that steroids could potentially bring them. I believe that there is no other way that high schools could cut down on steroid use.

Sincerely  
Ben Rosema

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Michael -

I cannot fully express how depressing it is that you, or anyone, would be pressing for steroid testing, via urinalysis, of high school students. How can you actually want to increase governmental intrusion into the lives of citizens? Do you really have so much confidence in such meddling? Perhaps soon you will be promoting the wearing of helmets at all times, including in our homes, the place where most injuries occur. Think of all the remedial monies that could be saved. If you really cared about your constituents you would spend your time devising ways to shrink government, not making it more invasive.

John Bonnell  
Roseville

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### **Mickey's Blog: Single-Gender Schools**

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The Michigan Senate, by a 33-5 vote, passed legislation on June 15 that would allow school districts to establish single-gendered schools and classrooms. Senate Bill 1296 will head to the House, where another version is being worked on.

When I was in junior high school, about 90 percent of my attention and energy was focused on a tall, blonde-haired girl named Karla. I can assure you that is a conservative estimate. If I had been able to

redirect that youthful energy on my studies, who knows what I might have accomplished. I don't know that I would have cured cancer or written the great American novel or perfected the fuel cell, but I surely would be further along toward achieving my ultimate goal of world domination.

Once in awhile, we need to be brave, to be bold, and to think outside of the box, although I find myself in disagreement with many of my friends on this bill. I have pushed for this legislation for six years, ever since I was a member of the Michigan House. I have received much flak for the idea but I toughed it out and kept pushing for it. Single-gender education deserves a chance. This bill is about choice. No one is forced to create a single-gender school or classroom, but the protection of state law is there for those schools that so choose.

Why would someone choose to create single-gender education? Clearly, for some students, parents, and educators it is a valuable option. Research shows that junior high school math and science participation and performance by girls begins to fall significantly in junior high and that single-gender classes can reverse that decline and help many women realize their full God-given potential.

I oppose discrimination as strongly as anyone, and I believe that this bill is not discriminatory, but instead is a positive act to empower both boys and girls. I welcome the debate about the constitutionality of this bill. I submit that equal treatment does not have to be the exact same treatment. Men and women are different and policy should be designed to allow each to flourish.

Title IX has allowed women's athletics to flourish, not by making women play football, but by spending equivalent scholarship dollars on other sports such as woman's soccer. That's why the U.S. women won the World Cup in 1999. Now if only the men's team can keep up the pace, we would be a true soccer power. Keeping everything the same for everyone ignores our differences. We should celebrate our diversity by tailoring education to help everyone achieve their potential in unique ways.

Birmingham has single-gender classes. They are hugely popular with a waiting list of 100 for 28 slots. You have to win the lottery to get into that class. Malcolm X Academy in Detroit posted the highest math scores among the city's 77 middle schools and was second in the state among 780 schools. Detroit wants to open two single-gender schools. We are all concerned about educational excellence in the city. This approach offers an opportunity to achieve significant gains, and it could act as a trailblazer for others considering this approach.

The South Lake Public School District in St. Clair Shores has declared that it plans to test out its own program at the middle school level. According to the *Detroit News*, the district has 27 girls and 23 boys that voluntarily enrolled in single-gendered math and language arts classes. Science, social studies and other classes would still be conducted in the traditional matter. So there is demand out there to try something new in the schools.

So what is your take on allowing school districts to create single-gender classrooms and schools? Let me know and I will publish some of your thoughts in the next issue of the *Insider E-newsletter*.

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## Mickey's TV Insider Show

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Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

### **Sterling Heights**

Every Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Utica**

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Clinton Township**

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Roseville**

Various Times  
(Comcast Channel 18)

\*Please note that Sterling Heights/Utica/Clinton Township will show the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 5 and Wide Open West Channel 10. Clinton Township will air the TV Insider Show at various times during the last week of every month. Roseville can see the TV Insider Show on Comcast Channel 18.

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## Coffee Hours

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\*Since my District Office is in Roseville, I do not have set coffee hours in Roseville. However, I encourage you to visit the Roseville office. We even have a coffee pot. Everyone is welcome to attend the coffee hours and discuss their issues and concerns.

**June 26**  
**7-9 p.m.**

Location: Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
(40900 Romeo Plank)  
Clinton Township

**July 31**  
**7-9 p.m.**

Location: Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
(35891 Gratiot)  
Clinton Township

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## Contact My Office

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**Website:** <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/switalski/>

**Email:** [senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov)

### Lansing Office

Senator Mickey Switalski  
Senate District 10  
410 Farnum  
PO Box 30036  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

(866)303-0110 toll free  
(517)373-7315  
Fax-(517)373-3126

### District Office

28311 Utica Road  
Roseville, MI 48066

Monday through Friday  
9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

(586)774-2430  
Fax-(586)774-0012